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SUBJECT: CIVIL PROTECTION DRILL IN IBARAKI PREFECTURE

11. SUMMARY: On September 29, 2006, in an exercise simulating a large-scale terrorist attack, the Ibaraki Prefectural Government conducted training with the central government, the Self-Defense Force, police, firefighters, and other organizations to practice rescuing citizens under the Civil Protection Law. Participating in the drill were 2,100-2,400 people from approximately 80-100 organizations across the nation. Some leading Japanese officials pointed out flaws in the drill, saying it was unrealistic because participants had advance copies of the scenario. According to Kayo Nozawa of the Cabinet Secretariat, Ibaraki Prefecture engaged an independent reviewer, Sogo Bosai Solution, to evaluate the effectiveness of the drill. Findings will be issued in mid-December. END SUMMARY.

Background

12. The Civil Protection Law, enacted in 2004, defines the responsibilities of central and local governments for responding to armed attacks, evacuating and rescuing residents, providing medical and food relief, guarding key facilities and other actions to protect citizens in an emergency. GOJ cosponsors training exercises with local governments to prepare actors in the event of an attack. The first drill, conducted in Fukui Prefecture in November 2005, simulated a terrorist attack on a nuclear power plant that damaged the facility and caused a potential leak of radioactive material. The scenario of the second drill, held in Hokkaido Prefecture in August 2006, assumed a terrorist attack against a petrochemical complex. The third drill, held in Ibaraki Prefecture in September 2006, was similar to the one in Fukui, except real evacuation drills were carried out in Ibaraki. The fourth drill is scheduled in Tottori Prefecture on November 26, 2006. It will involve a chemical attack against a large, crowded facility with civilians needing to be evacuated. The main purpose of these drills is to examine the effectiveness of each prefecture's plan to protect its citizens during a crisis.

GOJ also plans to conduct map exercises in eight prefectures (Saitama, Tokyo, Fukui, Osaka, Tottori, Ehime, Fukuoka, and Saga) on various scenarios including a bombing at a terminal station and intrusion by gunmen of unknown nationality. Participating prefectures in the map drills will practice procedures to analyze the situation in the field and maintain contact with government entities and other relevant institutions.

Details of the Drill

13. Embassy Science officer attended the September drill.

Everything went according to plan. The chain of events surprised very few people. For example, a player representing one of the prefectural task force teams was reading the scenario guide during the drill.

A. MAJOR EXERCISE SITES: The three main facilities included: 1) an emergency headquarters set up at the Ibaraki Prefectural Office; 2) a Nuclear Off-Site Center where the prefectural task force teams assembled; and 3) an evacuation center or safe haven located inside a multipurpose gymnasium, where radiological screening, first aid, and food was provided. Video conferencing (VTC) at each site provided information exchange and situational updates.

B. EVACUEES: Approximately 700 residents from Tokaimura and nearby areas participated in the evacuation drill. Social workers and firefighters helped those unable to evacuate independently, including the elderly and school-aged children. According to a site official, local residents were informed of the time to vacate their homes or schools and the amount of time necessary to reach the rescue center. To facilitate the evacuation, a one-way restriction was imposed on some streets in advance. The evacuees entered the evacuation center quietly without any sense of urgency.

C. OVERALL SCENARIO: At 7:00AM, unidentified terrorists attacked the Second Tokai Nuclear Power Plant (Shirakata, Tokaimura) of the Japan Atomic Power Company. The high-voltage cable was destroyed and the reactor automatically shut down. The Power Company alerted the appropriate crisis management officials and the GOJ established an emergency headquarters, an off-site center, and a safe haven. At 8:10AM, the GOJ gave warning to the residents, issued evacuation instructions to the local governments, and assigned special tasks to other relevant organizations as outlined in the Basic Policy Guidelines for emergencies. At 10:15AM, at the off-site center, the Ibaraki Prefectural Task Force Teams held its second meeting and the Joint Response Council began drafting regional evacuation plans. At 10:40AM, the GOJ issued additional evacuation instructions. The GOJ conducted a VTC with the off-site center. Following the VTC, a third task force team meeting was held. By 12:00PM, the evacuation was completed and all the terrorists were captured. At 12:10PM, release of radioactivity began. The GOJ responded by conducting aerial and maritime monitoring of radioactivity. At the safe haven, a disaster guidance seminar for residents was convened and radiological screenings were administered. At 12:20PM, the Ibaraki Prefectural Task Force and the Joint Response Council held a fourth meeting. By 13:10PM, the Japan Power Company reported that the radioactivity release had ceased. At 13:20PM, the Ibaraki Prefectural Task Force and the Joint Response Council held a final meeting.

The drill was followed by a 2:00PM press conference. Cabinet Secretariat Councillor Genzo Inoue said that the scenario

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should not have been issued in advance. Governor Masaru Hashimoto concurred with Inoue, but also pointed out the value of having citizens practice their roles and responsibilities in such training exercises. Since the disastrous nuclear accident in 1999, Ibaraki has held regular nuclear disaster drills. However, a drill based on a terrorist attack was a first time occurrence and mystified some. Tokaimura Head Tatsuya Murakami commented that, in his view, the release of radioactive materials is a more realistic threat to local residents than terrorism. Therefore, he wondered which scenario should have been given higher priority.

SCHIEFFER